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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

TO : Educational Specialists

DATE: 14 May 1963

FROM : Chief, Testing Branch/AES/MS

SUBJECT: Report of Meeting on Part-time Training Courses

1. Many thanks for letting me see the attached report. It is certainly a comprehensive and explicit coverage of what transpired at the meeting on pros and cons of part-time training courses.

2. Let me comment on a few of the specific points in your memorandum:

a. Under section 3b, which lists the cons with respect to part-time training, the first item, noting the paucity of relevant research, is well stated; but this is really neither a pro nor a con.

b. In section 4b, listing the cons of full-time training, the first item concerns variety of training methods and activities. I realize that [REDACTED] presented this point as a con; but from what is known about learning efficiency, it seems to me the point is really a pro for full-time training.

c. In the first paragraph of your section 5, it seems to me that the word "significance" would be more appropriate than the term "feasibility".

3. My only disappointment in the report is that it does not seem to reflect what I had intended to be the major point of my own presentation; namely, the only way OTR will determine whether students learn more and better in a full-time or part-time offering of the same training is to carry out its own careful experiment, including rigorous and meaningful evaluation of students' learning under each of the two respective conditions. [REDACTED] pointed out, quite legitimately I thought, that LAS has done this for some courses, though perhaps not in a perfectly designed research way. As I understood his report, LAS has found that, for most students, full-time training produces the better mastery of language, although there are some students who seem to profit proportionately more from part-time training. The main value of their informal research has seemed to be that they now have increased savvy about which kind of training is more appropriate for any given student. If OTR has any interest in basing decisions about part-time vs. full-time training on considerations of learning efficiency, rather than on just logistical considerations, then it would seem to me that LAS has begun to show the way for practically meaningful research.

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